

Assemblyman
PAUL KORETZ
 Forty-second Assembly District

proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks



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Koretz Targets Methamphetamine User Labs

California Legislation Patterned After Effective Oklahoma Law

(Sacramento) – Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) today announced the introduction of state legislation that would require the tablet forms of pseudoephedrine-containing cold medicines to be sold behind the pharmacy counter. The bill, AB 283, is patterned after an Oklahoma law that has been credited with reducing crystal methamphetamine lab busts by as much as 70 percent.

“Crystal meth is fueling an increase in HIV infections around the state and West Hollywood is at the epicenter. It is absolutely incredible how many problems are created by meth – HIV infections, child poisoning and developmental disorders, addiction and its destruction of successful lives, law enforcement injuries and deaths, fire and chemical hazards right inside our own neighborhoods, and toxic wastes that contaminate soil and water resources. We simply have to try what is working in other states,” said Assemblyman Koretz.

Methamphetamine gives the user a false sense of invincibility that can lead to riskier sexual activity. A study of San Francisco public health data found that meth users are three times more likely to test positive for HIV than non-meth users. Crystal has become the party drug of choice in the gay club scene and is making significant inroads in straight clubs as well.

In addition to moving some cold medicines behind the pharmacy counter, the Koretz legislation would require purchasers of the tablet form of any over-the-counter medicine containing pseudoephedrine to show valid photo identification and to sign a transaction record. Like the Oklahoma law, gel cap and liquid forms of pseudoephedrine products would be exempted because they are not easily used in the illegal manufacture of crystal methamphetamine.

The Koretz bill is co-authored by Senator Bob Margett (R-Arcadia) and Assemblyman Bill Maze (R-Visalia) and similar bills are receiving bipartisan support in legislatures across the nation. Mr. Koretz is consulting with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department on the legislation.

“Cold tablets purchased and shoplifted from retail stores are a primary ingredient for traffickers cooking methamphetamine in clandestine labs in the community. These user labs not only feed a serious drug problem, but also pose a serious fire and chemical exposure hazard in residential neighborhoods. This bill will save lives,” said L.A. County Sheriff Lee Baca.

Last month, U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein (D-California) introduced federal legislation that would enact provisions of existing California law limiting the quantity of pseudoephedrine that can be purchased in a single transaction as well as require photo identification and the signature of a transaction log.

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